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V. Ward, *Filial Duty*  
*Stated & Enforced,*  
1810.

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FILIAL DUTY,  
STATED AND ENFORCED  
IN AN  
AFFECTIONATE ADDRESS  
TO  
**Young People:**

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BY VALENTINE WARD.

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HONOUR THY FATHER & THY MOTHER; EX. 20. 12

This precept requires not only that we should shew our parents respect and deference, but likewise that we should assist and relieve them, and perform such services for them as they may stand in need of.

CRUDEN.

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London :

Sold by T. Blanshard City Road. W. Baines Paternoster Row.  
By all the Booksellers in Sheffield. And at the Methodist Chapels  
in Town and Country.

1810.

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J. Crome, Printer, Bridge-street, near Mill-sands, Sheffield.

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# ADVERTISEMENT.

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TO a few distinguished individuals in the Church of Christ it is granted to wield successfully the weapons of Theological controversy, and to exhibit the peculiar doctrines of Revelation, free from human glosses, and encumbrances, in their most attractive and impressive forms, whilst others are not less happily employed in calling the attention of their fellow creatures to the great, plain, truths of practical Religion.

The Author of the following pages has often lamented the neglect of *FILIAL DUTY*, especially in Religious families; and not knowing of any small treatise which is calculated to remedy the evil, he presents the following address to young people, hoping and praying that it may be useful; and should this be the case he will be more than satisfied; he will bethankful.

SHEFFIELD, MARCH 1810.



THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF LONDON

FROM THE FOUNDATION OF THE CITY  
TO THE PRESENT TIME  
BY JOHN STOW  
1618

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# FILIAL DUTY.

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MY YOUNG FRIENDS.

I beg leave without many Cere-  
monious professions and apologies, to call  
your serious attention to a subject in which  
the interests and happiness, not only of  
yourselves and parents, but of your neigh-  
bours, your Country, and of generations  
yet unborn, are very much involved. God  
has spared to you the life, of at least one of  
your parents.—Have you ever when con-  
trasting your situation with that of poor or-  
phan children who are perpetually exposed  
to the frowns and insults of an unkind world,  
offered a tribute of Praise to the kind Au-  
thor of your mercies? And have you like-  
wise duly considered the nature, number,  
and extent of those affectionate regards,  
which are due from you to those who have  
been the instruments of your existence,  
who have conferred, and continue daily to  
confer upon you, such great and numerous  
benefits?

A superficial acquaintance with the  
world is sufficient to convince us that Filial

is Duty too little understood, and even by those who know it, too much neglected.

And is not this a sufficient reason why the real friends of mankind should use all the means in their power to instruct the ignorant, alarm the obstinate, and even to stir up the minds of the best children by way of remembrance?

That this subject has occupied the attention of the wisest Philosophers and Legislators, and especially that God hath enjoined and urged it in his book, are circumstances which strikingly evince its vast importance; and that it should ever be disregarded is matter of serious regret.

As it is certain that some children neglect their duties to their parents partly for want of clearly understanding them, and others for want of feeling their solemn weight; I purpose in the following pages First to state these duties with perspicuity and precision;—And Secondly to urge them by those considerations which are most likely to move the youthful heart.

And now my Young Friends, I must beg you with suitable dispositions, to accompany me on this holy ground. Let us place ourselves as in the immediate presence of our Heavenly Father, Lawgiver, and Judge;



and let us listen with Reverence, to the first explicit revelation of his will on the subject of Filial Duty.

HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER :  
THAT THY DAYS MAY BE LONG IN THE LAND  
WHICH THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE. This solemn precept is frequently referred to, repeated and amplified in the scriptures. Let it be our present business to understand its nature and import.

The word "honour," of which the Almighty hath made choice in the fifth Commandment is, undoubtedly the best that could possibly have been selected. It inculcates a disposition which implies the habitual exercise of *Fear* and *Love*, and requires them to be constantly evident in the words, the actions, and even in the gestures of children. Had a word been used which required the continual influence of only one of these passions, the commandment would have been defective. Suppose for example children had been commanded only to *Fear* their parents, how exceedingly irksome all the restraints of parental authority would have been ! How very unpleasant the constant uneasiness of the child in the presence of his parents, and how uncertain his obedience in their absence ! But suppose *Love*

only had been enjoined,—would not this have occasioned a degree of boldness and familiarity, if nothing worse on the part of the child, which would have been highly improper? But a word is used which requires all those Reverential, respectful, and Affectionate attentions, which adorn the lives of all those good children, whom I wish my Young Friends would make it their constant study to imitate.—I hope that you will have patience with me while I further endeavour to explain this momentous subject. The precept under consideration requires that you should treat the persons and characters of your parents with respect, their opinions with deference, and their instructions and advice with attention; that you yield a cheerful obedience to their Commands, and that you use your utmost efforts to render their last days comfortable.

This precept requires 1st. That you treat the persons and characters of your parents with respect. But here I would not be understood as recommending merely that external respect which is shown by some children in the presence of their parents, who indulge dispositions which in their absence lead to a contrary conduct. Such constrained, partial, and might I not say, deceitful modesty is nothing worth.

The most respectful sentiments should be always cherished in the hearts of young persons towards their parents, who should always be considered by them as their superiors, and at the same time as their greatest friends and benefactors. Nor is it by any means allowable, should they discover any blemishes in their persons, or faults in their conduct, for them to make these the subjects of conversation; rather they should study how they might with the greatest delicacy veil them from the view of others. If this be one of the indispensable obligations of children, we can feel no hesitation in condemning those, who frown, or scold, or use bad language in the presence of their parents; or those who, whatever good they may manifest in their presence, despise them in their hearts, and when they are out of their sight, make sport of what they conceive to be their imperfections. This subject might receive some illustration from the conduct of the sons of Noah; two of whom conducting themselves with becoming respect and delicacy, obtained the blessing of God, whilst the other by an opposite line of conduct, brought down upon himself the divine displeasure. GEN. 9. 20. 27.

The example of Joseph also will set my meaning in a still clearer light. How amiable does this great man appear when he meets his father at Goshen, and with the most affectionate tenderness falls upon his neck and weeps for a long time. GEN. 46. 29. And when he presented his children to him to receive his blessing, "he bowed himself with his face to the earth" GEN. 48. 12. Nor did the tender regards of this son of ten thousand end with the life of his father; but when it pleased God to end the earthly course of the venerable old man, Joseph "fell upon his face and wept upon him and kissed him;" GEN. 50. 1. And afterwards with the warmest expressions of that filial love, which had so long reigned in his heart, and adorned his exemplary and useful life, he deposited his remains in the sepulchre of his ancestors.

But it is required *2dly*. that you regard the opinions of your parents with *deference*. As all men, the wisest and best not excepted, are liable to mistake, so no mans opinion can be considered as the infallible standard of truth; it is nevertheless thought right among men to pay deference to the opinions of those persons of integrity, whose Judgements are matured by age, learning



and experience. And in whose judgement can children in general confide with so much propriety and safety as in that of their parents, or who can be thought so likely to consult their interest in the decisions which they form and communicate? If this be the case, surely those young persons cannot be said to honour their parents, who always receive with greater readiness the opinions of strangers, or have greater confidence in their own, and who indulge themselves in habits of impertinent contradiction. Even when children are positively certain that their own opinions are right, and those of their parents erroneous, if they express their dissent at all, it should be with the greatest meekness and sweetness of spirit, and then rather in a way of interrogation than assertion. "Be not wise in thine own eyes." PROV. 3. 7. Moses was himself a great man and received much instruction from God, and yet it is impossible to read without pleasure, of the docility and deference with which he received the opinion and counsel of his father-in-law EXODUS 18. 7. 24.

But this brings me to shew my Young Friends, 3dly That the precept which we are explaining, requires them to regard the instruction and advice of their parents with *attention*.



Children do not come into this world with their minds stored with knowledge. On the contrary it is an opinion generally if not universally received, that we derive all our ideas first thro the medium of our senses, and secondly from reflection. It will therefore be readily acknowledged that first impressions are vastly momentous, and from the relative situations of parents it is natural to expect, that they will, according to their ability, furnish their offspring with instruction and advice, on all subjects of importance, whether they relate to the present world or to that which is to come. And all persons will readily agree, that those young people dishonour their parents, who habitually, or even occasionally, treat their counsel with disregard. It is indeed the duty of children, and a duty of which they should never be ashamed or tired, to solicit parental instruction and advice. To acquire all the information which their parents have to impart, respecting the mode in which they should conduct themselves in the business, enjoyments, sufferings, friendships, and civilities of the present life. To consult them on all great occurrences and never to take one important step in life, without the advice and approbation of their parents, unless

unless they are indubitably certain that the advice of their parents is directly contrary to the revealed will of God. And one would willingly hope that there are but few, if any parents, in this Christian country, who would in such cases be extravagantly tenacious of their own honour.

As I expect this address will fall into the hands of children, whose parents do their utmost to teach them the way to Heaven, let them remember that it is their indispensable duty to hang upon their lips with a fixed and silent attention, to drink in their instructions with avidity, and to lay them up in their memories and affections as the most valuable treasures. *My son hear the instruction of thy Father, and forsake not the law of thy Mother: For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck. PROV. 1. 8. 9. Hearken unto thy Father that begat thee, and despise not thy Mother when she is old. PR. 23. 22.* And the same writer still urging his pupil to attend to parental instruction, says, *When thou goest it shall lead thee, when thou sleepest it shall keep thee, and when thou wakest it shall talk with thee. 6. 22.*

It would be very improper to recommend every part of the conduct of Jacob and Esau to the imitation of young people,

but they well deserve to be held up as patterns in the regard which they paid to the advice and will of their parents in contracting alliances. GEN. 28. 1—9.

But 4thly, you are required to yield a cheerful obedience to their commands, Subordination which is essential to order in civil communities, is not less so in the domestic circle, and the right of parents to command is not derived merely, either from their age, experience, multiplied benefactions or situation, but from the explicit and paramount authority of God. Thus, the Apostle Paul who wrote under the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, when writing to the Collossians on relative duties, expressly urges children to obey their parents in all things ; for this is well pleasing to the Lord. COLL. 3. 20. Parental authority being thus indisputably established on a foundation which can never be removed, every good child will consider it to be his unquestionable duty, to pay a prompt and unvarying regard to all the injunctions and prohibitions both of father and mother. There is indeed one exception which we have already glanced at,—and that is, where the will of the parent evidently clashes with the express command of God. In all such ca-

ses God has undoubtably the greatest claim to our obedience; nor should any penalties, or privations however severe, be able to extort from us obedience to sinful requisitions. Lest this should be abused, I must further observe, that where the case is doubtful, and especially in all things indifferent, the will of the parent is a law, sacredly to be observed by the child.

This being the true state of the case, how criminal are those young persons, who treat their parents' commands, or prohibitions with silent disregard! And how shockingly wicked and insolent, not only to their best earthly friends, but to God himself, are those rebellious sons and daughters who positively refuse to obey! *Ye shall fear every man his Mother, and his Father, I am the Lord your God.* LEV. 19. 3. This part of our subject will derive both light and force from the examples of Isaac and the Rechabites.

Isaac, tho' called a "lad" is supposed to have been between twenty and thirty years of age when his father received the command to sacrifice him on mount Moriah; being arrived at the appointed spot, the father bound the son, laid him on the altar, and was about to strike the fatal blow, but



was prevented by the angel of the Lord.

Which shall we most admire, the piety of the father or the filial submission of the son ? GEN. 22. 1. 19. The Rechabites were commanded by Jonadab the son of Rechab, their father, that they should drink no wine, nor their sons for ever. That they should neither build houses nor sow seed, nor plant vineyards nor have any ; but that they should dwell in tents all their days. This commandment was undoubtedly a difficult one, and many would be their powerful temptations to disobedience, but such was the strength of their affection for their father, and such their regard to his commands, that no difficulties however great, no temptations however strong, could ever prevail with them to disobey. And mark the honour which God set upon them ! After reproving his people by contrasting their conduct towards himself, with that of the Rechabites towards their father, he concludes thus, "Because you have obeyed the commandment of Jonadab your father, and kept all his precepts, and done according to all that he hath commanded you : Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel ; Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever." JER. 35.



Nor should we forget, the still more striking example of Jesus Christ. For altho' he was Lord of all, yet he not only humbled himself to be our Saviour, and to leave adult christians "an example that they should follow his steps," but he has even condescended to leave children a pattern of filial subjection; for it is said that he went with Mary his mother, and Joseph who was only his supposed father, and dwelt with them at Nazareth and *was subject unto them.* LUKE. 2. 51.

It still remains that I state to my young friends, one branch more of your duty to your parents viz.—*That you use your utmost efforts to render their last days comfortable.*

That this is implied in the precept under consideration is evident, first, from the explanation of it given by our Lord MATT. 15.3.6. We find that according to the traditions of the self-righteous and hypocritical Pharisees, if a child had property whose parents needed his assistance he might refuse them his help and yet be innocent, provided he resolved to present what he had as a gift to the treasury. But our divine teacher and Lord, exposed, and justly condemned their dangerous error. The following is Dr. Doddridge's improvement on this sub-

ject. "Let *children* learn from the *command* which *Christ* has vindicated, to *honour their parents* by a tender care of them in their declining days; remembering, that as no filial duty or gratitude can ever fully repay our obligations to such friends, so an affectionate regard to them is a proper and necessary expression of our filial piety to the great *Father of our spirits*. Justly may he esteem his *temples prophaned*, rather than adorned, by the most costly *gifts* which are the spoils of nature, and the *trophies of inhumanity*."

But that relief is included in the word honour appears, Secondly, from 1 Tim. 5. 3. &c. "*Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widows have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents, for that is good and acceptable to God.* Here we are taught that piety requires both children and nephews if they have it in their power, to keep their widowed parents and aunts from living upon those funds, formed by the pious benevolence of christians, for the relief and support of the sick, and aged poor.

Many parents are by the blessing of providence, happily placed beyond the necessity of receiving pecuniary aid from their

children. Yet even in such cases the comfort of old age frequently depends very much on the affectionate and sympathetic attentions of children. Should this happen to be the case with the parents of any of my readers, let me indulge the hope that they will make the following language their own.

Me let the tender office long engage,  
 To rock the cradle of reposing age ;  
 With lenient arts extend a mother's breath,  
 Make langour smile and smooth the bed of death ;  
 Explore the thought, explain the asking eye,  
 And keep awhile one parent from the sky ?

POPE.

But alas ! how numerous are the poor old people who are rendered quite unable to procure for themselves the necessaries of life, and who are intirely dependant, for their existence, on parochial or other charitable, and sometimes precarious, relief. All children who have parents in circumstances like these, are bound by the fifth commandment as well as by every tie of natural affection, to exert all their wisdom and strength to procure for them a comfortable subsistence.

It would be easy to mention the names of persons now living who have for years

made it their pleasure to administer to the wants of aged and infirm parents ; but delicacy forbids. However God will most certainly remember their work and labour of love, and may the number of such instances increase.

The following examples which are both taken from Murray's spelling book will tend both to illustrate and enforce this branch of filial duty.

### 1. The Boy of Dundee.

A poor widow, at Dundee in Scotland used to spin and work very hard, in order that she might maintain herself, and her little son. She could not read ; but she wished her son might learn, and she sent him to school ; as he took pains, he learned to read well.

When he was about twelve years of age, his mother had a paralytic stroke, and lost the use of her limbs ; so she was obliged to lie in bed all day long, and she could not spin or work any more.

As she had not been able to save any money, she could not hire any body to clean her house, and to work for her ; and she was very much distressed. A poor woman who was her neighbour used sometimes to call and assist her : but her son was



her great comfort. He said within himself, "I will not let my mother die for want. I will work for her: I will maintain her. God, I hope, will bless me, and prosper my work." He went to a manufactory in the town where he lived; and got some work. Every day he went to the manufactory and worked hard, harder than if he had worked for himself alone; and in the evening he brought his wages to his poor mother. Before he went in the morning he always cleaned the room for his poor mother; and got their breakfast ready, and did all he could to make her comfortable while he was absent.

This good boy thought if his mother could read, she could amuse and employ herself, when he was not with her: so he took a great deal of pains and taught her to read. When she had learned she was highly delighted; "Now," said she, I am very happy. I am indeed confined to my bed, and I cannot work; but I can read the Bible and that is a great comfort to me; and I have one of the best and kindest of sons.

## 2 The Workhouse Boy.

A boy about ten years of age, having lost his father, and his mother having been ill at



an hospital, was sent to a workhouse in Shrewsbury. He behaved well, and worked hard, that he might deserve the food, and cloaths, and other necessaries which were allowed him.

Very soon he had some money given him as a reward; and he was told that he might do with the money as he pleased. As soon as he had received it, he asked his master leave to go and see his mother; and he took the money with him and gave it to her.

It is scarcely possible to say too much on the exemplary affection of Joseph for his father. With what tenderness did he inquire of his brethren, before he made himself known to them, "Is your father well. The old man of whom ye spake; Is he yet alive?" GEN. 43. 7. And after he had made himself known he said to them, "Haste ye and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not: And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast. And there will I nourish thee, for there are yet five

years of famine, lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty." GEN. 45. 9. 10. 11.

David also, during the time that he suffered so much from the envy, ambition, and cruelty of Saul, discovered great tenderness towards his parents.

He presented an address to the King of Moab, requesting him to let his father and mother reside at Mizpeh, till he knew what God would do for him. 1 Sam. 22. 23. And even he whom David called Lord, when he was passing thro' the hottest of his sufferings, did not forget his mother, but recommended her to the particular care and regard of his beloved disciple. John 19. 25.

And does not the noble glow of pious emulation animate the bosom of my young reader? Are you not ready to say, "by the grace of God, I will endeavour to equal the best of the examples which you have mentioned? My parents hearts shall never bleed with sorrow, occasioned by my unkind, or undutiful behaviour towards them, neither shall my name be rendered odious to good men, nor my example have the least tendency to spread, among my young acquaintance disrespect, or disobedience to parents. On the contrary nothing shall be

wanting on my part, which comes within the limits of my ability, to make them comfortable both in body and mind."

Before I proceed more particularly to enforce, what I have endeavoured to explain, I shall make two brief remarks.

First. It is not, I presume without design, that God, in the command which we have been considering, requires that children should honour both their parents. It not unfrequently happens that children, especially boys, stand in awe of their father while he is present, and are afraid to disobey or act irreverently at all, who, in his absence, manifest towards the mother the most shameful and painful disrespect. However the misguided affection, and lenity, of mothers may on some occasions be accessory to such conduct in children, it cannot by any means be defended or excused, but must be utterly condemned as base, and dishonourable. It is quite proper, should any difference be allowed, that the mother be treated with the most gentle and delicate attention; and all young people who understand and love their duty, will cultivate in their hearts, and evince in their practice, the most affectionate esteem

teem for the parent to whose maternal tenderness they are so much indebted.

We read in history of statues being erected by the people of Argos, in honour of two brothers, for making extraordinary exertions in behalf of their mother. And in 1 Kings 2. 19. We read, that when the mother of Solomon, after his accession to the throne, came to speak with him, "he rose up to meet her and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the Kings Mother; and she sat on his right hand." Shall we not consider this part of the conduct of the wise man, as at once evincing his wisdom, and adding lustre to his character!

My second remark is, that no age is specified at which filial subordination should terminate. The laws of our Country allow children to act for themselves without, or even against, the consent of their parents when they arrive at the age of one and twenty, and the unyielding dispositions of some young persons, of both sexes, lead them to cast off parental restraint much earlier. No sooner do they find themselves able to procure subsistence for themselves than they either remove into a distant country, or into the houses of persons in their own neighbourhood, or else they enter into such



stipulations with their parents as rather tend to injure than benefit the circumstances of the old people: and also too often conduct themselves towards them with a surly disdainful carriage. I need not take up time to prove that this is contrary to the Divine command: but must observe, that whatever liberties might be allowed by human laws, and whatever opinions men may form respecting the freedom of children from parental controul at a certain age; the Bible knows nothing of such doctrine. And it is impossible for any one to prove, that, while parents live in this world, children may refuse to honour them and be innocent.

And now my young friends I hope you understand with a degree of accuracy, the line of conduct which you are required to pursue towards both your parents. Lest your hearts should feel disinclined to what your Judgements must approve; I proceed to fulfil the *second* part of my design, and hope, by the blessing of God, to be successful, while I urge your duties upon you, by calling your attention, to the sentiments of the wise and good.—The claims of *Gratitude*—The Authority of God, with the happiness consequent upon complying with his will, and the miseries attendant on disobedience.

And first let the sentiments of the wise and good on this subject have their due weight with you. We might indeed appeal to many of the wicked without fear of Contradiction ; for many of those who disregard the rules of propriety in their own conduct, will readily applaud those children who behave well to their parents, and condemn those who disregard or disobey them. Some of the wisest and best of men have differed and continue to differ, in their sentiments, on many subjects of considerable importance ; but if it were possible to collect all their opinions on the subject before us there would be little or no disagreement amongst them.

It would be very easy to select a large catalogue of the names of those who have published their views to the world, and shew their agreement with each other, but I shall content myself at present with a quotation from Dr. Doddridge's Lectures Vol. 1. Page 241. in which he has compressed the opinions of various authors to whose works he refers.

1. Forasmuch as children have received important favours from their parents, gratitude, and therefore virtue requires, that they should *love* them.

2. Considering the superiority of age, and the probable superiority of wisdom,

which there is on the side of the parents, and also how much the satisfaction and comfort of a parent depend on the respect shewn him by his children it is fit that children should *reverence* their parents.

3. It is fit that while their parents are living, and the use of their understanding continued, their children should not ordinarily undertake any matter of great importance without *advising* with them, or without very cogent reasons pursue it contrary to their consent.

4. As young people need some guidance and government in their minority, and as there is some peculiar reason to trust the prudence, care, and affection of a parent, preferable to any other person, it is reasonable that children, especially while in their minority should *obey* their parents, without which, neither the order of families nor the happiness of the rising generation could be secured: nevertheless still supposing that the commands of the parents are not inconsistent with the will of God.

5. Virtue requires, that if parents come to want, children should take care to furnish them with the necessaries of life, and so far as their ability will permit, with the conveniences of it.

If we could hear all the Ministers of the Gospel discourse on this subject, and were



to consult all our neighbours who have any reputation for common sense, or love of morality; we should find little or no variation of judgment amongst them.

And shall I think so ungenerously of my young readers as to suppose that the common voice of mankind, especially of the wisest and best of every age, will have no effect upon them! I would rather hope that this consideration will not only tend to confirm those who already make it their study to honour their parents, but also to reclaim and reform those who have hitherto wandered from the right way.

Consider. 2dly. The claims of *Gratitude*. And here indeed, is a source of reflection which ought to melt into tenderness the most obdurate heart. — That every one whether old or young, should feel himself so obliged by every benefit conferred by another, as to cherish the most thankful dispositions towards his benefactor, and seize the best opportunities of expressing them, are sentiments which none will be wicked enough to controvert. Even the heathens themselves were wont to consider, the ungrateful as amongst the basest of characters, and the charge of ingratitude was to them one of the most disgraceful imputations.

The Egyptians from whom Heathen Greece



and Rome derived their knowledge and virtue, are Justly praised for estimating so highly the importance and obligations of Gratitude. See Rollin's Hist. V. I. P. 190.

"There is not (says Addison) a more pleasing exercise of the mind, than gratitude. It is accompanied with so great inward satisfaction, that the duty is sufficiently rewarded by the performance. It is not, like the practice of many other virtues, difficult and painful; but attended with so much pleasure, that were there no positive command which enjoined it, nor any recompense laid up for it hereafter, a generous mind would indulge in it, for the natural gratification it affords."

But what does gratitude demand from you? I shall endeavour to shew you that your debt is great, and that to refuse to pay it, would be exceedingly criminal.

Some of you may be capable of considering the severe pangs which it cost your mother, to bring you into the world; and how nearly her life was falling a sacrifice in the perilous struggle. Nor should the anxiety of your father at that critical Juncture remain unnoticed. With what fond attention have they (especially your mother) watched your infant hours! How fearful lest your peaceful slumbers should be inter-

rupted!—How careful of your health!—Never would they, if it could be avoided, suffer you to be exposed to excessive heat or cold,—much less to the infection of epidemic disorders. But, were you notwithstanding all their precaution, afflicted?

And was there any appearance of danger?—

Who can describe the sorrows of their hearts, or who would pretend to number the tears they shed? No one could be allowed to substitute them in their assiduous attentions, until the health of the parent was sacrificed to that of the child. No eye was deemed sufficiently penetrating and watchful in discovering your wants, no heart tender enough to feel them, nor any hand sufficiently delicate and ready in relieving them.

None who have not had experience can tell the pleasure which they felt as they traced the dawnings of reason in your looks and actions, and when they began to hear you intelligibly articulate sounds, their pleasure bordered on rapture. Their affections were ready to regard every look and action as expressive of inherent excellences; and on these indications they were ever ready to build extensive hopes of future greatness and goodness on your part, and much felicity on their own. To them it was indeed a delightful task, to rear the tender

thought, and teach the young idea how to shoot. To pour the fresh instruction on the mind, and push the generous purpose to resolve." How many restless nights and laborious days have they passed on your account! Those plans which cost so much thought in forming, and so much toil in executing, were chiefly that you might be provided with all the necessaries of life, and as many of its comforts as could possibly be procured. I might easily proceed in the same strain, but hope I have said enough on this point. For what young person can reflect on these things without inquiring, "what returns can I make to my dearest and best friends for all their anxieties and toils, their sorrows and sacrifices on my account? Shall I return their kindness with insults?—Shall I, on whom their earthly happiness chiefly depends, embitter their last days, or bring their grey hairs down with sorrow to the grave? Ah no—rather let my tongue be forever mute, than that I should ever by improper language offend their ears, or grieve their affectionate hearts. Rather let my hand be palsied, than that I should ever be unwilling to assist them; yea rather let my heart be cold than that I should ever indulge towards them for a moment a disrespectful or unkind disposition."



Let me hope, my young friends, that these are the generous sentiments which glow in your bosoms. You have the happiness or misery of your parents much in your own power. O strive by all possible means to recompense their past kindnesses, and be assured that when you have done your best, there will be a mighty debt of gratitude yet undischarged. May your parents have all the happiness that can be derived from the respectful and kind regards of loving and dutiful children; and never have to lament with many parents, that their persons are disrespected, their counsels slighted, and their affectionate and beneficent care repaid with ingratitude.

But we have the most fruitful source of powerful motives yet to come. Consider 3dly.

*"The Authority of God, with the happiness consequent upon complying with his will, and the miseries attendant on disobedience."*

And here my subject assumes an aspect truly solemn. We have already seen that God, who is represented as "creating and upholding all things by his powerful word."—as, "decking himself with light as with a garment, making the clouds his chariot, and walking upon the wings of the wind,---weighing the hills in scales and the mountains in a balance,—holding the winds in his fist and the waters of the sea in the hollow of his hand, and taking up the isles as a very little thing!"



We read, I say of this *Majestic God*, whom angels and archangels, cherubim and seraphim, continually revere and adore; condescending to direct children how they should conduct themselves towards their parents, and enforcing his commands by the most Glorious, and Tremendous, sanctions.

And will any son or daughter, after considering this, presume to neglect the 5th commandment! Will not each rather say. "Is it the express will of my Maker,—my Redeemer,—my Sanctifier,—and my Judge. that I should honour my father and mother! And was the revelation of his will at first attended with such awful grandeur that Moses, the man of God said, I exceedingly fear and quake! And shall I a poor helpless creature brought into being by his power and preserved every moment by his wise and bountiful providence!—shall I for a moment dare to indulge a rebellious thought against Him! God forbid!—Let me on the contrary, strive night and day, to render the lives of those comfortable whom he has wisely and graciously placed over me, and to whom he has, for a time at least delegated a degree of his own authority." O that this might be the heartfelt language of all my young readers! Should this be the case you have every reason to expect that felicity, will attend you all your future days.

This is called by St. Paul, "the first commandment with promise." **EPH. 6. 2.**

The promise to the Jews was particular, it was that they should "live long in the land of Canaan," but under the Gospel dispensation it is wisely made more general. "That it may be well with thee, &c."

The reputation of the obedient child goes before him into all companies ; and however it may excite the sneer of the dissolute, it will secure him the confidence and friendship of all those whose opinions and esteem are worth notice. There is the best reason to expect that such an one will fill up every future station, which Providence may appoint, whether he be rich or poor, with the greatest punctuality, fidelity and honour. And who can be so likely, or so proper to be invited to occupy places of trust and respectability ? But what is still better, as we have already hinted, such children have every reason to expect the blessing of God upon their undertakings, so that they have much greater security of temporal prosperity, than that afforded by the favour of men, however great or good.

And is there not good reason to hope that these will comply with every other requisition and injunction, of the law and Gospel of God ? Besides how tranquil must be the minds of those children whose consciences

acquit them of any neglect of filial duty, and who are also firmly persuaded that God approves of their conduct towards their parents! See the good child attending the death-bed of his parent.—performing the last sad offices of affection, or following him or her to the grave! He feels and laments his loss; but how pleasant to reflect, that he never wilfully caused those eyes which are now closed in death to be suffused with tears of anguish, those pale cheeks to redden with anger, or that quiet bosom to swell with uneasy emotion!

And will not the righteous Judge at the last day present the obedient child with a brighter crown than even those who have in the latter part of life repented of their past disobedience, and obtained mercy? undoubtedly. Conceive, if you can, the happiness of those parents, and children, who having been made partakers of the grace of life in this world, and fulfilled their respective obligations to each other to the Glory of God, and weathered the storms of life with christian fortitude; are now greeting each other in the Paradise of God! How sweet their converse!—How intimate, pure, and strong their friendship!—How delightful their retrospective reflections and remarks! But it is vain to attempt fully to describe their happiness, as to count the drops in the ocean  
or



or the sands upon the shore. My most earnest desire and prayer for all my young readers, is that they may participate in this unspeakable and eternal blessedness.

But mark the awful contrast!—what shall be the portion of the disobedient child? Had he lived in the best times of heathen Greece or Rome, he would have been despised and degraded; and had he lived, under the Mosaic dispensation he would have been deemed accursed, and put to death! DEUT. 21.—18.—21. I bid. 27.—16. And is this crime thought less atrocious in a christian, than in a heathen country? Does it not meet with a partial punishment by men in our own land? Is not the bad child shunned, and suspected by the best characters? Yes; and hence you will seldom find such young persons form good connexions, or succeed well in their temporal concerns. But should men suffer such to go unpunished, is not God as much displeased with rebellious children now as when he gave the law to Moses? Most certainly he is. Hence we find in the new Testament the disobedient to parents classed with the most abominable characters! and threatened with the most tremendous punishment. Indeed, were unruly children to suffer nothing more than the upbraidings of their own consciences, and the rage of their own unsubdued passions there



case would be deplorable ; but that Jealous God who “will bring every work into Judgment,” will most certainly pursue them with his curse ; and punish them in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone for ever.

The hardened, profligate, disobedient child, may now despise the counsels, and insult the feelings of his parents, and even laugh at the authority of God, but when the great Judge shall call the Nations to his bar, his brutal courage will forsake him, fearfulness and trembling will take hold of him.—How will he wish for the rocks and mountains to cover him ! And should his parents be found at the right hand of the Judge, how will it increase his misery to be for ever separated from those who took such affectionate interest in his welfare !

And now my young friends, are you almost, or altogether persuaded to “Honour your parents.” Are you who are now reading these pages one of those who already understand and delight in their duty ? Your conduct gives the best evidence that you value the sentiments of the wise and good,—that your heart is not insensible to the demands of gratitude,—that you wish to resemble the excellent of the earth, but especially, that you regard the will of the great and ever blessed God,—that you fear his frown and hope in his promises. And do you not al-

ready enjoy in part the peaceful fruits of filial piety ! Go on ; be not weary in doing well in this respect, and in due time you shall reap a vast and eternal reward. not because there is any real merit in your good works, but because God has promised thus to reward them thro' the infinite merit of your Redeemer and Saviour.

But has the present reader of these lines been a rebellious child ! And will not your stubborn heart yield to the proceeding considerations ? O repent of your past misconduct ! Do not add one pang to those which you have already given your parents. Do not provoke God another day. Your parents are willing to forgive you !—Your Heavenly Father is also willing !—Yield therefore this moment, and let your present repentance and your future affectionate attention, remove, if possible, from the minds of your parents your past undutifulness.

Three brief remarks more, and then I must take my leave, for the present, of my young readers.

Ist. This short address may fall into the hands of some young people who make a particular profession of religion. To such I would say, that there is this reason in addition to every other why they should “Honour their father and mother.”

2dly. Children should not by any means think themselves discharged from their duty because their parents neglect theirs. This remark should be observed by people, in every relative situation of life.

LASTLY. It should be indelibly impressed upon the minds of all, especially of children, that all power to do good comes from God. He is not only the source of wisdom from which we receive all valuable instruction, and of Mercy which pardons and comforts all penitent believers in Jesus; but also of that gracious power by which all that look to him are enabled to obey all the precepts of his word.

*Let me then entreat all who shall deign to look into this little pamphlet, but especially those for whose benefit it is principally designed, earnestly and constantly, to implore the influences of the Holy Ghost, that they may be enabled in the spirit of faith and love, to "do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in thro' the gates into the City." REV. 22.—14. There may the writer and the readers of this short address meet each other to ascribe unto our God and Saviour, Glory, and honour, and blessing and praise, and might, and majesty and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen.*

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